

**AMENITIES SUB-COMMITTEE held at 7.30 pm at COUNCIL OFFICES LONDON ROAD
SAFFRON WALDEN on 16 MARCH 2000**

Present: Councillor Mrs J E Menell - Chairman
Councillors Mrs C M Dean, Mrs C D Down, D W Gregory, D M Jones, D J Morson, R J O'Neill
and G W Powers.

Officers in attendance: J Bosworth, M R Dellow, Mrs S McLagan,
M T Purkiss, Mrs C Roberts and B Smeeden

I. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors R C Smith and A C Streeter.

Councillor R J O'Neill declared an interest in item 5 on the agenda insofar as he was the Chairman of the Friends of Bridge End Gardens. Councillor Mrs C M Dean declared an interest in item 3 on the agenda insofar as she was a member of the Stansted Mountfitchet Parish Council.

I. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 27 January 2000 were received, confirmed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

I. BUSINESS ARISING

Minute AM62(ii) - Parking Strategy Working Party - Decriminalisation

Councillor R J O'Neill congratulated officers on the drafting of this Minute.

I. REPORTS OF REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE BODIES

The written report of Councillor Mrs S Flack on the meeting of the Essex Rural Transport Partnership was circulated at the meeting and considered in detail.

Councillor G W Powers added that all Essex MPs had been invited to the meeting and that the only one who attended, Bernard Jenkin, had taken great interest, spending much time informing himself about what he considered a most important issue. Councillor Powers continued that of the many Essex Rural Transport Partnership projects across the County, the ones at Brentwood and Epping were new ventures and it appeared that one project was likely to obtain a 3 year extension of funding, with indirect benefits on the funding of other projects. He asked the Sub-Committee to note that the system of funding by reimbursement would cause problems for small project groups. In answer to questions from Members he explained the funding and range of operations of the partnership.

I. BRIDGE END GARDENS WORKING PARTY

The Minutes of the meeting of the Bridge End Gardens Working Party held on 6 March 2000 were received. The Chairman welcomed the Head of Local Plan and Conservation to the meeting.

Councillor D J Morson, the Chairman of the Working Party, presented the Minutes and expressed his pleasure that the funding was now available to help the Council put in a bid for Heritage Lottery funding and that funds were also available to start some of the restoration works.

(i) Minute BEG18 - Restoration and Management Plan

In answer to a question from Councillor R J O'Neill the Chief Accountant informed the meeting that he believed responsibility for the Slade rested with riparian owners.

(ii) Minute BEG18(iv) - Maze security fencing

The Head of Local Plan and Conservation advised that some of the fencing to be provided was a short term solution. In the longer term hedging and stretches of permanent "heritage" fencing would be used where historically or visually appropriate. Councillor R J O'Neill asked that fencing be provided in particular on the north-west side of the gardens where children often broke in over the wall of the kitchen garden.

(iii) Minute BEG19 - Budget Provision 2000/01

The Head of Local Plan and Conservation explained that private subscriptions had raised money for the restoration of the Maze viewing platform and it was hoped to do this in time for a Maze Conference planned to be held in Saffron Walden during the summer of 2000. The structure would be historically appropriate though not an exact replica of the original, since too little of that was left to emulate.

(iv) Minute BEG20 - Gardener/Supervisor - Job Description

Councillor D J Morson explained that it was hoped to advertise this post on a 12 months contract rather than the 6 months previously suggested. Councillor Jones asked about the possibility of head hunting for a gardener rather than advertising. The Head of Local Plan and Conservation said that the Head of Personnel and Contract Services advised advertisement in line with current Council practice. In answer to a question Councillor D J Morson agreed that the gardener would be expected to oversee the whole gardens and to be a vital part of their security. He agreed that proper and adequate first aid provision including training, if necessary, would have to be provided.

(v) Minute BEG21 - Applications for external funding

It was anticipated that savings could be achieved and a detailed report itemising costs would be submitted to the next meeting of the Working Party.

Councillor R J O'Neill informed the meeting that the Friends of Bridge End Gardens hoped to become a registered charity very shortly.

(vi) Minute BEG22 - Replanting of the pond

It was noted that the pond to be replanted was situated in the kitchen garden not the Dutch garden. Councillor R J O'Neill informed the meeting that £300 was available from the Friends of Bridge End Gardens for aquatic planting if necessary. Councillor D J Morson expressed his thanks for this offer and thanked the Head of Local Plan and Conservation and the Landscape Officer for all the work undertaken by them to further the restoration of the gardens.

(vii) Officer designations in the Minutes

Councillor Mrs C Dean asked that Officer designations be included in the list of officers present at a meeting, as well as in the general text, for the benefit of new Members.

RESOLVED that

- 1 the job description for the gardener/supervisor be amended by the addition of a penultimate key responsibility "to oversee the security of the gardens and of those visiting them" and by altering the words "would be desirable" in selection criterion 2 to "will be necessary"
- 2 subject to the advice of the Head of Personnel and Contract Services, the words "as agreed with the postholder" be added to the last key responsibility
- 3 the Internal Services Sub-Committee be asked to approve the grading of the post
- 4 the post be advertised at the earliest possible opportunity for an initial 12 months contract
- 5 the Minutes of the meeting of the Bridge End Gardens Working Party held on 6 March 2000 be approved and adopted including the recommendations contained in Minutes BEG18 and BEG20 as amended.

I. LARGE SCALE PROJECT GRANT REQUESTS

The Head of Community and Leisure Services presented a report on requests received from recipients of Large Scale Project Grants for awards to be carried over to the next financial year because of particular circumstances.

RESOLVED that

- 1 grants awarded to Saffron Walden Town Football Club, Arkesden Parish Council, Ashdon Parish Council, Ashdon Windmill, Stansted Mountfitchet Parish Council and Wimbish Village Hall be carried forward to 2000/2001
- 2 the request received from Great Chesterford Parish Council for permission to use part of its original grant allocation to carry out tree work be refused
- 3 the Policy and Resources Committee be asked to approve the carrying forward of the remaining grant allocation of £580.88 to the Large Scale Grant Budget for 2000/01.

I. **AD HOC GRANT REQUESTS**

The Sub-Committee considered applications for ad hoc grants received since the last meeting and noted that the balance available from the budget was £1,785.

RESOLVED that

- 1 a grant of £500 be made to the Newport Sports Committee
- 2 a grant of £350 be made to Victoria Hinton
- 3 a letter be sent to Mrs Lawrence, who had applied for a grant to set up a youth club at Great Hallingbury, explaining that fund raising is necessary to prompt an ad hoc grant and that the project has been drawn to the attention of the Youth Initiatives Working Group.

I. **MILLENNIUM AD HOC GRANT REQUEST**

The Sub-Committee considered an application from Takeley Festival 2000 towards the cost of advertising and catering for an event for Takeley Villagers in the form of entertainment and worship in the Church. It was noted that the project did not support one of the Millennium Festival themes and that the applicant had not undertaken fund raising towards it.

RESOLVED that

- 1 the application from Takeley Festival 2000 be refused
- 2 the Policy and Resources Committee be asked to approve the carrying over to 2000/2001 of the unspent balance of £935 for further ad hoc grants.

I. **INFORMATION EXCHANGE EVENING - FEEDBACK**

The Sub-Committee received a report on feedback from organisations and Members who had attended the Voluntary Organisation Support Grant Information Exchange Evening on 17 January 2000. It was noted that a meeting of the Airport Working Party had affected Councillors' attendance at this particular information exchange evening.

RESOLVED that the Voluntary Organisation Support Grant Working Group meet to discuss the future of the Information Exchange Evening.

I. **1999/2000 BUDGET MONITORING REPORT**

The Chief Accountant presented this report and drew attention to the Community Transport Budget.

The Head of Community and Leisure Services confirmed that Carolyn Wingfield had been appointed Museum Curator and would take up office on 2 May. Work to the Curator's house was due to be completed towards the end of May.

I. **LAST MEETING**

The Chairman thanked Members for their support during the municipal year and Members thanked her for her leadership.

The meeting ended at 9.05 pm.